STATE OF THE EXCHANGE / **HEALTHCARE.GOV**

Updated: November 25, 2013

For months, Obama administration officials chanted the same reassuring chorus – the health care exchange was "on track" and would be ready to enroll Americans in health care plans on October 1. Over a month into the rollout of Healthcare.gov, the functional centerpiece of the President's health care law, the federal exchange is still not fully functional. Each day the story evolves and the promises and pledges are revised anew. What began as purported "glitches" stemming from high "volume" have unraveled to reveal a case study in government mismanagement and systemic failure.

It is unclear at this point who exactly knew what and when, but the following document serves to present what has thus far been uncovered about the failed implementation of the federal exchange. An analysis of a timeline of events and findings yields three key takeaways:

1.) FAIR WARNING WITHOUT INTERVENTION: There were many instances in which warnings or concerns about the implementation of the exchange were issued, both early on in the process and well into its development. As early as May 2010, advisers to the administration expressed concerns about the personnel and processes put in place to execute the President's health care law. Internal reports suggest that senior officials were made aware of some of these issues and either did not understand them, did not properly elevate them, or did not work to resolve them.

2.) LARGE TECH PROJECT MARKED BY GOVERNMENT MISMANAGEMENT: The President consistently issued comparisons between Healthcare.gov and private sector technology counterparts: the experience would be comparable to Amazon.com or Kayak; the site might have some glitches, but so did Apple when it launched its new iPhone operating system. In the end, however, such comparisons would only illustrate the gap between private and public performance, processes, and standards. By measure of cost, the development of the exchanges costs as much as four times[1] that of developing the iPhone. Evidently, the bureaucratic morass at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) was ill-equipped to handle a project of this nature.

3.) POLITICS AT PLAY: Regulations were postponed and specifications delayed to avoid political criticism during the 2012 election cycle. The decision to run the project through CMS instead of through a specific team within HHS also seemed to derive from political considerations. While the statute of the law provided money for the implementation of state exchanges, it technically did not provide for the establishment of the federal exchange. Management of the project was moved to CMS to avoid appropriations battles of a separate "office" of HHS.

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[1] http://www.forbes.com/sites/timworstall/2013/10/17/developing-obamacares-health-care-exchanges-has-cost-more-than-apples-original-iphone/

BY THE NUMBERS

36 – States where the Federal Government is running the Exchange (FFE)

106,185 – Total people enrolled in new health-insurance plans during the first month

26,794 – Number out of the total number able to sign up through FFE

23 per state per day – Rate that individuals signed up through FFE in first month

79,391 – Number who signed up through state-run exchanges

500,000 – Administration target enrollment for the first month

7,000,000 – Previous Congressional Budget Office projection for enrollment for the first year

392,000 – People deemed eligible for Medicaid or CHIP in the first month

800,000 – Revised target enrollment by end of November

3,300,000 – Administration target enrollment for October through December

17% – Americans potentially eligible for coverage who have accessed the new exchanges

30% – Qualified for federal subsidies of 1.1 million Americans who registered on exchanges

$635 Million – Dollars contracted to CGI Federal for the Exchange

$3.8 Billion – Total amount HHS has awarded to establish, plan, and innovate the exchanges

500 Million – Lines of code running Healthcare.gov

500,000 – Lines of code to implement the Curiosity Mars Rover.

PROCESS + ERRORS

LOGIN + REGISTRATION	PROOF OF IDENTITY & ELIGIBILITY	SHOP FOR A PLAN	INSURANCE ENROLLMENT
Many users experienced issues logging in and creating an online account. Reports surfaced that the Obama administration decided to install this gateway in late September, requiring shoppers to log in before shopping for health plans.	After verifying identity, the system must determine eligibility, which requires the system to verify consumer income through the Data Hub, integrating data from dozens of state and federal agencies.	Once the system determines eligibility for subsidies or public programs, users should be able to browse various plans and their cost. However, users that get to this stage have reported widespread errors.	Once users have chosen a plan, a report known as an 834 is sent to insurance companies. Insurers reported duplicative & incomplete 834s.

KEY DOCUMENTS + RESOURCES

- HHS Enrollment Report: 10/1/2013-11/2/2013

- Memo From David Cutler to Larry Summers on Obamacare Implementation, 5/11/2010

- GAO: PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT: Status of CMS Efforts to Establish Federally Facilitated Health Insurance Exchanges, 6/19/2013

- GAO: PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT: Status of Federal and State Efforts to Establish Health Insurance Exchanges for Small Businesses, 6/19/2013

- HHS IG REPORT: Observation Noted During the OIG Review of CMS's Implementation of the Health Insurance Exchange Data Services HUB, 8/2/2013

- "RED TEAM" EVALUATION: A document uncovered by the Energy and Commerce Committee and prepared by McKinsey & Co. in March of 2013 warned of problems with the website's implementation and design process

- INTERNAL EMAILS: A series of documents handed over by HHS to the Energy and Commerce Committee discuss major issues with the website build in July

- INTERNAL EMAILS: A series of emails revealed by the Energy and Commerce Committee show that Obama administration officials feared the site launch in September

- WAR ROOM NOTES: The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform released 175 pages of internal communications between administration officials in the days after the launch

- Security Analysis: TrustedSec, LLC issued an independent security analysis of Healthcare.gov, which they provided to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

MAIN CONTRACTORS

CGI Federal, based in Fairfax County, is a main contractor building HealthCare.gov. It is a subsidiary of CGI Group Inc., a Canadian Information technology company.

Quality Software Services Inc. (QSSI), based in Columbia, is another main contractor building HealthCare.gov. It is owned by Optum Insight, a unit of UnitedHealth Group.

TIMELINE OF THE FAILED EXCHANGE ROLLOUT

MAY 11, 2010
INTERNAL MEMO TO LARRY SUMMERS RAISES CONCERNS ABOUT LAW'S IMPLEMENTATION
David Cutler, A Harvard professor and health adviser to Obama's 2008 campaign wrote: "I am concerned that the personnel and processes you have in place are not up to the task…" [2]

JANUARY 2011
IMPLEMENTATION TEAM MOVED TO CMS WITHIN NEWLY NAMED CENTER FOR CONSUMER INFORMATION AND INSURANCE OVERSIGHT
The HHS was tasked with implementing the law and created a new unit responsible for building the insurance marketplaces inside the office of Secretary Sebelius as the Office of Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight. The office moved in January of 2011[3] into CMS and was renamed the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight (CCIIO). Within the large bureaucracy of CMS, some believed, the new Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight would be better insulated from the efforts of House Republicans to "undermine" the law. Most importantly, the move shielded the administration from a financial conflict: while the statute provided plenty of money to help states build their own insurance exchanges, it included no money for the development of a federal exchange — and Republicans could block any funding attempts to a separate unit of HHS.[4]

SPRING 2011
WHITE HOUSE STALLS WORK ON FEDERAL EXCHANGES FOR POLITICAL REASONS
According to two former officials, CMS staff members struggled at "multiple meetings" during the spring of 2011 to persuade White House officials for permission to publish diagrams known as "concepts of operation," which would help show states what a federal exchange would look like. The two officials said the White House was reluctant because the diagrams were complex, and they feared that the Republicans might use that politically.[5]

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[2] http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/challenges-have-dogged-obamas-health-plan-since-2010/2013/11/02/453fba42-426b-11e3-a624-41d661b0bb78_story.html
[3] http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/2011/01/05/132686083/hhs-insurance-oversight-office-to-become-part-of-medicare-agency
[4] http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/challenges-have-dogged-obamas-health-plan-since-2010/2013/11/02/453fba42-426b-11e3-a624-41d661b0bb78_story_1.html
[5] http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/challenges-have-dogged-obamas-health-plan-since-2010/2013/11/02/453fba42-426b-11e3-a624-41d661b0bb78_story_1.html

SEPTEMBER 2011

WHITE HOUSE ISSUES "SCOPE OF WORK" FOR IT CONTRACT WITHOUT SPECS ON SIZE OF PROJECT

When issuing specifications for the "scope of work" for the largest IT contract, CMS skirted the issue of how many states would require a federal exchange by saying only "CMS will not know for certain how many states will apply" to run their own insurance exchanges. According to a former official, the White House feared that Republicans would seize on more detailed specifications as evidence of a feared federal takeover of the health-care system.[6]

SEPTEMBER 30, 2011

CONTRACT WITH CGI FEDERAL SIGNED WITHOUT PERFORMANCE DELIVERABLES

During the bidding process in 2011, the HHS' "statement of work" did not include requirements typical of many IT contracts. The agreement that CGI Federal signed on Sept. 30, 2011, did not contain specific performance criteria, success measures or response times.[7]

DECEMBER 2011

CGI FEDERAL AWARDED $94 MILLION CONTRACT

CMS awarded CGI Federal the first $55.7 million delivery order in 2011 when, "most of the regulations and guidance implementing the Affordable Care Act had not yet been finalized," said a person with knowledge of the award.[8]

JANUARY 18, 2012

WHITE HOUSE HEALTH REFORM PROGRESS REPORT: HHS "HAS THE CAPACITY…"

"The Department has the capacity to ensure all Americans will be able to purchase insurance in an Exchange on January 1, 2014...In collaboration with contractors, other agencies, and States, HHS has completed work on key IT and operational business processes and business requirements for the Federally-facilitated Exchange." [9]

2012

DECISIONS DELAYED TO AVOID CONTROVERSY DURING ELECTION CYCLE

Key regulations languished inside the Office of Management and Budget for months while the Supreme Court weighed the constitutionality of the law and the president campaigned for re-election. In one instance, a rule governing the design of plans to be sold on the exchange was completed and signed by Marilyn Tavenner, the CMS Administrator, on May 15, 2012, approved by Kathleen Sebelius, the HHS Secretary, on August 6, but was not released publicly until November 26, three weeks after the election, [10] The White House also hoped that more states would decide to build their own exchanges after the 2012 election. One former official recalls: "The dynamic was you'd have [CMS's leaders] going to the White House saying, 'We've got to get this process going.' There would be pushback from the White House."[11]

[6] http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/challenges-have-dogged-obamas-health-plan-since-2010/2013/11/02/453fba42-426b-11e3-a624-41d661b0bb78_story_1.html

[7] http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/healthcaregov-goal-80-percent-able-to-enroll-for-insurance-through-web-site/2013/11/16/04fa02a2-4e1a-11e3-ac54-aa84301ced81_story_1.html

[8] http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/17/us-usa-healthcare-technology-insight-idUSBRE99G05Q20131017

[9] http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/01-18-12_exchange_report.pdf

[10] http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304682504579158043537719338

[11] http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/challenges-have-dogged-obamas-health-plan-since-2010/2013/11/02/453fba42-426b-11e3-a624-41d661b0bb78_story_3.html

LATE 2012
CMS STAFF WORRY THAT WORK ON EXCHANGES WAS LAGGING
According to a former official, some staffers were aware by late 2012 that the work of building the federal exchange was lagging. Employees warned at meetings late last year and in January that so many things were behind schedule that there would be no time for adequate "end to end" testing of how the moving parts worked together.[12]

FEBRUARY 14, 2013
GARY COHEN, DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR AND DIRECTOR OF CCIIO - "WE ARE ON TRACK AND WE WILL BE READY" BY OCTOBER 1. [13]

SPRING 2013
CGI FEDERAL REPORTEDLY BEGINS WRITING CODE
The government was slow in issuing specifications and the firm did not start writing software code until this spring, according to "people familiar with the process."[14]

MARCH 2013
GOVERNMENT IT DASHBOARD FLAGS EXCHANGE PROJECT AS "HIGH RISK"
IT Dashboard is a website that provides public data on the status of major government technology projects. In March, the dashboard downgraded the health-care exchange project to red, or high-risk, before returning it to green the next month. A spokesman for the White House's Office of Management and Budget said the project was quickly upgraded "once complete documentation was submitted."[15]

MARCH 28 – APRIL 8, 2013
RISK ASSESSMENT BY MCKINSEY AND CO. TO SENIOR HHS OFFICIALS WARNS OF RISKS
The "red team" report identified six fundamental issues in the development of the exchange: Its needs were evolving, rather than clearly articulated; there was no clear definition of success; the program relied too heavily contractors and other outside parties; the design, build and test phases were not sequential with too little time for valid end-to-end testing of the system; and the site was expected to launch at full volume rather than phasing in over time.[16]

The Energy and Commerce Committee learned that HHS officials were briefed on the report on four separate occasions: March 28 at CMS Headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland, April 4 at HHS Headquarters in Washington, DC, April 5 at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, and April 8 at the White House.[17]

APRIL 2013
CGI FEDERAL AWARDED $27.7 MILLION MORE FOR WORK ON EXCHANGES[18]

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[12] http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/challenges-have-dogged-obamas-health-plan-since-2010/2013/11/02/453fba42-426b-11e3-a624-41d661b0bb78_story_4.html

[13] http://www.businessweek.com/news/2013-02-14/insurance-exchanges-are-on-track-health-official-says

[14] http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/13/us/politics/from-the-start-signs-of-trouble-at-health-portal.html

[15] http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304868404579194213125368676

[16] http://www.politico.com/story/2013/11/report-warned-of-healthcaregov-flaws-last-spring-100037.html?hp=l1

[17] http://energycommerce.house.gov/icymi/news-media-outlets-report-document-reveals-administration-was-briefed-march-implementation-woes

[18] http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/17/us-usa-healthcare-technology-insight-idUSBRE99G05Q20131017

APRIL 12, 2013

SEBELIUS: "WE ARE ON TRACK TO MEET THE OCT. 1 DEADLINE"

In testimony before the Ways and Means Committee, Secretary Sebelius reiterated:
"We are confident we will launch the exchanges. We will be open for enrollment Oct. 1."[19]

APRIL 17, 2013

SENATOR MAX BAUCUS: "I JUST SEE A HUGE TRAIN WRECK COMING DOWN."

"I just see a huge train wreck coming down," he told Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius at a Senate Finance Committee hearing. "You and I have discussed this many times, and I don't see any results yet." [20]

APRIL 24, 2013

GARY COHEN, CCIIO, TESTIFIES IMPLEMENTATION IS "ON TRACK" AND "ON SCHEDULE" [21]

MAY 2013

CGI FEDERAL AWARDED $58 MILLION MORE FOR WORK ON EXCHANGES[22]

FINAL TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS STILL BEING FINALIZED BY CMS

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services didn't give CGI final technical requirements for healthcare.gov until May, according to one person familiar with the project. About a third of the work the contractor had previously performed had to be thrown out and started over as a result. [23]

MAY 21, 2013

GARY COHEN, CCIIO, TESTIFIES EXCHANGES ARE "ON SCHEDULE"

At a hearing on May 21, 2013, before the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Gary Cohen, Deputy Administrator and Director of the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight also testified, "I think we are very much on schedule; we are moving forward. We are going to be ready October 1st for open enrollment to begin." [24]

JUNE 7, 2013

OBAMA: EXCHANGES WILL ALLOW YOU TO "COMPARISON SHOP" LIKE "CARS OR AIRLINE TICKETS"

"...beginning on October 1st of this year, you can comparison shop an array of private health insurance plans side-by-side, just like you were going online to compare cars or airline tickets."[25]

JUNE 19, 2013

OBAMA: OBAMACARE IS "WORKING THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO"

"This is the way that the law was designed to work. But since everybody has been saying how it's not going to happen, I think it's important for us to recognize and acknowledge this is working the way it's supposed to." [26]

[19] http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/312075-1
[20] http://thehill.com/blogs/healthwatch/health-reform-implementation/294501-baucus-warns-of-huge-train-wreck-in-obamacare-implementation
[21] http://energycommerce.house.gov/press-release/subcommittee-continues-obamacare-oversight-laws-deadlines-loom
[22] http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/17/us-usa-healthcare-technology-insight-idUSBRE99G05Q20131017
[23] http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-10-22/obamacare-crashes-months-in-coming-not-easily-repaired.html
[24] http://oversight.house.gov/hearing/examining-the-concerns-about-obamacare-outreach-campaign/
[25] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p73wK92R-0E&noredirect=1

GAO WARNS: OBAMACARE IMPLEMENTATION BEHIND SCHEDULE, FACING MAJOR CHALLENGES

The reports found that CMS had "many key activities remaining to be completed across the core exchange functions – eligibility and enrollment, including development and implementation of the data hub; program management; and consumer assistance." [27]

JULY 8, 2013

INTERNAL EMAILS: EXCHANGE "BUILD APPEARS WAY OFF TRACK."

CMS Official Jeffrey Grant sounded the alarm in July writing to high-level administration officials: "We just got off an extended set of development planning meetings with [Office of Information Services]. Suffice it to say, the FM build appears way off track and is getting worse."[28]

"ENTIRE BUILD IS IN JEOPARDY"

While detailing unresolved components of the exchange development to administration officials, Grant reiterates the gravity of the situation stating, "We believe that our entire build is in jeopardy."[29]

JULY 16, 2013

HENRY CHAO, DEPUTY CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER AT CMS, RELAYS WORRIES TO CMS OFFICIALS OVER EMAIL

Email exchanges between high level administration officials highlight concerns that the website would not be ready by October 1. Henry Chao, a key manager of Healthcare.gov writes, "I just need to feel more confident they are not going to crash the plane at take-off, regardless of price."[30]

JULY 17, 2013

TAVENNER: ASSURES THAT EXCHANGES WILL BE "OPEN FOR BUSINESS" OCT. 1

Marilyn Tavenner, Administrator for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, testified, "I want to assure you that [on] October 1, 2013, the health insurance marketplace will be open for business. Consumers will be able to long onto Healthcare.gov, fill out an application and find out what coverage and benefits they qualify for." [31]

JULY 28, 2013

SEBELIUS: EVERYTHING IS "ON TRACK" TO "FLIP THE SWITCH"

"No, I think we're on target. The data hub has been built and is ready to go. We are testing information flows back and forth. We have got the call center up and running. We have relaunched the website, We're having outreach meetings, so we are on track to flip the switch on October 1st and say to people come on and sign up and as you said it is a six-month open enrollment period, so between October 1st and the 31st of March we hope to reach about 7 million people across the country and have them begin to engage and enroll in affordable health care, some for the first time ever."[32]

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[26] http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/07/statement-president

[27] GAO: PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT: Status of CMS Efforts to Establish Federally Facilitated Health Insurance Exchanges; GAO: PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT: Status of Federal and State Efforts to Establish Health Insurance Exchanges for Small Businesses

[28] http://apps.washingtonpost.com/g/page/national/e-mails-show-administration-had-concerns-about-healthcaregov-contractor/612/#document/p4/a133355

[29] http://energycommerce.house.gov/sites/republicans.energycommerce.house.gov/files/20131115-HHSemails-July2013.pdf

[30] http://energycommerce.house.gov/sites/republicans.energycommerce.house.gov/files/20131115-HHSemails-July2013.pdf

[31] http://oversight.house.gov/hearing/evaluating-privacy-security-and-fraud-concerns-with-obamacares-information-sharing-apparatus/

[32] WFAA's " Daybreak Sunday," 7/28/13

JULY 29, 2013

HENRY CHAO: "WE ARE IN BAD SHAPE"

Two months before launch, Chao expresses the dire state of the project over email. "We are in bad shape. Perhaps worse than ever before and we are not even touching the hard stuff yet."[33]

AUGUST 1, 2013

TAVENNER: END-TO-END TESTING WILL BE CONDUCTED BEFORE OCT. 1

"CMS has already completed the majority of the development of the services required to support open enrollment beginning on October 1, 2013, for coverage starting January 1, 2014. CMS has been conducting systems tests since October 2012 and will complete end-to-end testing before open enrollment begins."[34]

AUGUST 6, 2013

HHS INSPECTOR GENERAL: OBAMACARE DATAHUB MONTHS BEHIND TESTING

A report by the HHS Government Inspector General raised concerns, noting that the federal government was months behind in testing data security and that it had surpassed several deadlines. Final security testing would not be assured until one day before exchanges went live. This process was scheduled to be completed in early June. The lack of testing subjected the system to security flaws that could lead to hackers stealing sensitive information, such as social security numbers provided during sign up.[35]

AUGUST 7, 2013

TAVENNER: CMS HAS COMPLETED THE MAJORITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT

In a hearing before the Energy and Commerce Committee, Marilyn Tavenner, the CMS Administrator, once again reiterated that that her department had "already completed the majority of the development of the services required to support open enrollment beginning on October 1, 2013." [36]

AUGUST 9, 2013

OBAMA LOWERS EXPECTATIONS - THERE WILL BE SOME 'GLITCHES'

"There is no doubt that in implementing the Affordable Care Act -- a program of this significance -- there are going to be some glitches. No doubt about it. There are going to be things where we say, you know what? We should have thought of that earlier, or this would work a little bit better or this needs an adjustment."[37]

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[33] http://apps.washingtonpost.com/g/page/national/e-mails-show-administration-had-concerns-about-healthcaregov-contractor/612/#document/p12/a133367

[34] http://docs.house.gov/meetings/IF/IF00/20130801/101237/HHRG-113-IF00-Wstate-TavennerM-20130801.pdf

[35] HHS IG: Observation Noted During the OIG Review of CMS's Implementation of the Health Insurance Exchange _ Data Services HUB.

[36] http://docs.house.gov/meetings/IF/IF00/20130801/101237/HHRG-113-IF00-Wstate-TavennerM-20130801.pdf

[37] http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2013/08/09/obama_no_doubt_obamacare_will_have_glitches.html

AUGUST 10, 2013

SEBELIUS: EXCHANGES WILL BE "OPEN FOR BUSINESS" IN EVERY STATE IN "SPANISH AND ENGLISH" OCTOBER 1.

"In every state in the country, regardless of what you hear. In every state in the country, there will be a new health marketplace open for business on October 1. There will be online availability that now is up and running. A website, healthcare.gov that's available in Spanish and English."[38]

AUGUST 13, 2013

SEBELIUS: OBAMACARE WILL BE "ONLINE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE PEOPLE HAVE NEVER HAD BEFORE."

"Well, on October 1st, Beth, new markets will open in every state in the country. An online shopping experience, which people have never had before, the opportunity to look at plans side by side, insurance coverage, and make a determination among five different levels of coverage."[39]

AUGUST 17, 2013

INTERNAL EMAIL BETWEEN CGI AND CMS: EXCHANGE 55% COMPLETE

A CGI Federal company employee sent an e-mail to a CMS staffers detailing an "updated schedule" for work on the exchange. The e-mail stated that, for the tasks that CGI was responsible for, the exchange was 55 percent complete.[40]

AUGUST 22, 2013

CGI FEDERAL MEETING WITH ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2013

INTERNAL CGI REPORT TO CMS ISSUES WARNINGS ABOUT SITE ISSUES

The CGI document describes "top risks currently open" and "outstanding issues currently being mitigated" and says the testing timeframes are "not adequate to complete full functional, system, and integration testing activities" The impact of the problems are listed as "significant."[41]

SEPTEMBER 2013

CGI FEDERAL AWARDED $18.2 MILLION MORE FOR WORK ON EXCHANGES

SEPTEMBER 5, 2013

WHITE HOUSE SEES DEMONSTRATION OF WEBSITE; STAFFERS SECRETLY ROOT FOR IT TO FAIL

Some staffers were so desperate to persuade the President to change course that, during a September 5 demonstration of the healthcare.gov website, they "secretly rooted for it to fail so that perhaps the White House would wait to open the exchange until it was ready."[42]

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[38] Remarks At The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, San Antonio, TX
[39] WAGA, 8/13/13
[40] http://www.scribd.com/doc/181040844/Email-exchange-regarding-the-Federally-Facilitated-Marketplace
[41] Revealed October 29)
[42] http://www.forbes.com/sites/theapothecary/2013/11/03/on-sept-5-test-of-obamacares-website-cms-staffers-secretly-rooted-for-it-to-fail/

SEPTEMBER 10, 2013

CGI FEDERAL TESTIFIES: "CONFIDENT" THAT IT WILL BE ABLE TO DELIVER FUNCTIONALITY ON OCT. 1

"At this time, CGI Federal is confident that it will deliver the functionality that CMS has directed to enable qualified individuals to begin enrolling in coverage when the initial enrollment period begins on October 1, 2013." [43]

SEPTEMBER 19, 2013

GARY COHEN, CCIIO, TESTIFIES BEFORE THE OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMITTEE

Two weeks before enrollment in the exchanges was set to begin, Gary Cohen, Deputy Administrator and Director of the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight testified before the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee: "Consumers will be able to go online, they will be able to get a determination of what tax subsidies they are eligible for, they'll be able to look at the plans that are available where they live, they will be able to see the premium next of subsidy that they would have to pay, and they will be able to choose a plan and get enrolled in coverage beginning October 1."[44]

SEPTEMBER 20, 2013

FORMER HHS OFFICIAL, JOEL ARIO - WE MAY SEE A REDEFINITION OF WHAT 'START' MEANS

"Nobody is going to say we're not starting on October 1," says Joel Ario, who previously oversaw health exchanges at HHS, "but in some situations, you may see a redefinition of what 'start' means."[45]

"TWO WEEKS" BEFORE LAUNCH

CMS MAKES DECISION TO REQUIRE USERS TO LOG IN BEFORE VIEWING PRICES

In a Hearing on October 24th, CGI Federal testified that the decision for users to log in and give personal information before viewing prices was made "two weeks" before going live.[46] Some have speculated that the reason for this was partly political, such that users would not be hit with "sticker shock" until beginning the sign-up process.[47]

SEPTEMBER 25, 2013

ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES DELAY OF SPANISH-LANGUAGE WEBSITE UNTIL NOVEMBER 1[48]

SEPTEMBER 26, 2013

ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES DELAY OF SHOP EXCHANGES UNTIL NOVEMBER 1.

Small business owners who want to use insurance markets designed especially for them will have to wait until sometime in November before they can finish their sign-ups.[49]

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[43] http://docs.house.gov/meetings/IF/IF14/20130910/101274/HHRG-113-IF14-Wstate-CampbellC-20130910.pdf
[44] http://energycommerce.house.gov/hearing/two-weeks-until-enrollment-questions-cciio
[45] http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/09/20/a-guide-to-freaking-out-about-the-newest-obamacare-glitch/
[46] https://grabien.com/file.php?id=9933
[47] http://www.forbes.com/sites/theapothecary/2013/10/14/obamacares-website-is-crashing-because-it-doesnt-want-you-to-know-health-plans-true-costs/
[48] http://bigstory.ap.org/article/health-law-online-sign-delayed-small-firms
[49] http://bigstory.ap.org/article/health-law-online-sign-delayed-small-firms

END-TO-END TESTING CONDUCTED FOUR TO SIX DAYS BEFORE LAUNCH, SYSTEM CRASHES

As late as Sept. 26, there had been no "end-to-end" testing of the site simulating the real-life experience of thousands of users simultaneously trying to get online and buy coverage. During the first end-to-end test, the system crashed with a few hundred users. [50] According to sources, "It was unequivocally clear from testing ... this wasn't ready." [51]

DELAY NOT CONSIDERED A POSSIBILITY

People working on the project knew that Oct. 1 was set in stone as a launch date. 'We named it the tyranny of the October 1 date,' said a person close to the project."[52]

SEPTEMBER 27, 2013

MEMO TO TAVENNER: SECURITY RISKS HIGH

The memo to Medicare chief Marilyn Tavenner said a website contractor wasn't able to test all the security controls in one complete version of the system. Insufficient testing "exposed a level of uncertainty that can be deemed as a high risk." The memo recommended setting up a security team to address risks, conduct daily tests, and a full security test within two to three months of going live.[53]

INTERNAL EMAILS: TESTS FAIL AT 500 CONCURRENT USERS

"I realize everything is a priority but…the facts are that we have not successfully [handled] more than 500 concurrent users filling out applications in an environment that is similarly in size to Day 1 production," Acting Director of the CMS Office of Enterprise Management David Nelson wrote in an e-mail on Sept. 27. "We cannot proactively find or replicate actual production capacity problems without an appropriately sized operational performance testing environment."[54]

SEPTEMBER 29, 2013

OBAMA: "THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT IS MOVING FORWARD…YOU CAN'T SHUT IT DOWN."

"The Affordable Care Act is moving forward. That funding is already in place. You can't shut it down."[55]

SEPTEMBER 30, 2013

INTERNAL MEMO BY QSSI – HEALTHCARE.GOV COULD ONLY HANDLE 1,100 USERS

The day before the exchange went live, the memo states, "Ran performance testing overnight in IMP1B environment. Working with CGI to tune the FFM environment to be able to handle maximum load. Currently we are able to reach 1100 users before response time gets too high. CGI is making changes to configuration." Later, the report states the goal is to "conduct more thorough testing with FFM to reach targets of up to 10,000 concurrent users in the next few days." It is unclear how the testing went.[56]

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[50] http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/house-panel-grills-contractors-on-troubled-health-insurance-web-site/2013/10/24/8f42c748-3ca7-11e3-b7ba-503fb5822c3e_story.html ; http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/health-insurance-exchange-launched-despite-signs-of-serious-problems/2013/10/21/161a3500-3a85-11e3-b6a9-da62c264f40e_story.html; www.cbsnews.com/8301-18563_162-57610138/obamacare-website-failed-in-tests-just-before-launch-date/
[51] http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18563_162-57610138/obamacare-website-failed-in-tests-just-before-launch-date/
[52] http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/health-insurance-exchange-launched-despite-signs-of-serious-problems/2013/10/21/161a3500-3a85-11e3-b6a9-da62c264f40e_story.html
[53] http://bigstory.ap.org/article/govt-document-health-site-posed-security-risk
[54] http://energycommerce.house.gov/sites/republicans.energycommerce.house.gov/files/20131121-Sept26to30AdministraitonEmails.pdf
[55] http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2013/09/30/obama_on_obamacare_you_cant_shut_it_down.html
[56] http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/QSSI-ACA-Redacted-Docs-Updated.pdf

CGI NOTES: AT LEAST 30 DEFECTS IN DELIVERABLE FEATURES

A spreadsheet produced by CGI, dated the day of the launch, shows that the company acknowledged about 30 defects on features scheduled to have been working already, including five that it classified as "critical."[57]

OCTOBER 1, 2013

EXCHANGES GO LIVE AT MIDNIGHT – SITE LOCKS UP SHORTLY AFTER

When the Web site went live Oct. 1, it locked up shortly after midnight as about 2,000 users attempted to complete the first step, according to two people familiar with the project.[58]

PROBLEMS ATTRIBUTED TO "TRAFFIC" TO BE FIXED WITHIN "HOURS"

"Unexpectedly high Internet traffic volumes spawned delays on the first day of operations for federally operated Obamacare health insurance marketplaces, but the problems would be resolved within hours, an official said on Tuesday."[59]

"WAR ROOM" NOTES: NO MENTION OF VOLUME AS CAUSE

Notes from the first day instead indicated that there were problems with verifying shoppers' identities and whether they were eligible for insurance subsidies, with some receiving incorrect determinations. The system was also denying Medicaid and CHIP enrollment to 90 percent of applicants based on their state residency, a problem officials had tried to fix at first but hadn't initially succeeded at.[60]

AT LEAST 47 STATE OR FEDERAL EXCHANGES TURN UP ERRORS

At least 47 states throughout the day turned up frequent error messages or traffic overload notices, particularly for 36 sites run by the federal government. One frequently observed glitch involved a page asking the user to answer security questions that either went blank or would not accept new data.[61]

OBAMA: SHOPPING ON HEALTHCARE.GOV JUST LIKE "KAYAK" OR "AMAZON"

"Just visit healthcare.gov, and there you can compare insurance plans, side by side, the same way you'd shop for a plane ticket on Kayak or a TV on Amazon. You enter some basic information, you'll be presented with a list of quality, affordable plans that are available in your area, with clear descriptions of what each plan covers, and what it will cost." [62]

OBAMA: ROLLOUT SIMILAR TO GLITCHES IN IPHONES

"Consider that just a couple of weeks ago, Apple rolled out a new mobile operating system, and within days, they found a glitch, so they fixed it. I don't remember anybody suggesting Apple should stop selling iPhones or iPads or threatening to shut down the company if they didn't." [63]

Apple spent about $150 million developing the iPhone, a groundbreaking miniature computing device, while the federal exchange cost more than $600 million.[64]

[57] http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/healthcaregov-contractor-had-high-confidence-but-low-success/2013/11/23/1ab2c2b2-5407-11e3-9fe0-fd2ca728e67c_story.html

[58] http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/health-insurance-exchange-launched-despite-signs-of-serious-problems/2013/10/21/161a3500-3a85-11e3-b6a9-da62c264f40e_story.html

[59] http://news.yahoo.com/u-expects-fix-obamacare-internet-problems-within-hours-161615479.html

[60] http://www.politico.com/story/2013/11/darrell-issa-obamacare-notes-99394.html

[61] http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/01/us-usa-healthcare-idUSBRE98T14R20131001

[62] http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/10/01/remarks-president-affordable-care-act-and-government-shutdown

[63] 10/1/2013 ; (Video)

OCTOBER 4, 2013

99% OF APPLICATIONS HIT A WALL

Health industry sources note that as few as 1 in 100 applications on the federal exchange contain enough information to enroll the applicant in an actual insurance plan.[65]

OCTOBER 5, 2013

OBAMA: "THE PRODUCT IS A REALLY GOOD ONE…THE WEBSITE GOT OVERWHELMED BY VOLUME."[66]

OCTOBER 6, 2013

TODD PARK, CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER: "THESE BUGS WERE A FUNCTION OF VOLUME."

U.S. Chief Technology Officer Todd Park said the government expected HealthCare.gov to draw 50,000 to 60,000 simultaneous users, but instead it has drawn as many as 250,000 at a time since it launched Oct. 1.[67]

OCTOBER 7, 2013

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS STILL MAINTAIN THAT "VOLUME" IS THE CULPRIT

"Volume is the problem," the official said. "We are expanding capacity to deal with it but – evidently – that is a delicate and long process."[68]

OCTOBER 8, 2013

"WAR ROOM" NOTES: INSURERS QUOTE THAT "200,000" BAD ENROLLMENTS ARE HAPPENING[69]

One week after the exchange opened, administration officials had begun to realize that its problems were widespread and could not be easily fixed. The documents show that officials were focused on addressing individual bugs, rather than the larger issue: The website was not working properly from Day 1.[70]

SITE TAKEN DOWN FOR REPAIRS

The fixes scheduled to begin at 1 a.m. Tuesday include software changes and moving part of the system to a new type of hardware, HHS said.[71]

OCTOBER 9, 2013

"WAR ROOM" NOTES: 30% OF APPLICANTS STILL CANNOT ENTER CRUCIAL INFORMATION

30 percent of applicants could not enter crucial information about income, address and citizenship. The application process on the website simply skipped over these items, the notes say.[72]

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[64] http://www.forbes.com/sites/timworstall/2013/10/17/developing-obamacares-health-care-exchanges-has-cost-more-than-apples-original-iphone/

[65] http://www.cnbc.com/id/101087965

[66] http://www.nbcnews.com/video/nbc-news/53194440#53194440

[67] http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/10/05/health-care-website-repairs/2927597/

[68] http://thelead.blogs.cnn.com/2013/10/07/obama-administration-no-obamacare-enrollment-numbers-until-november-at-earliest-volume-is-problem-on-website/

[69] http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/11/06/inside-the-obamacare-war-room-healthcare-govs-launch-was-chaos/

[70] http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/06/us/politics/senator-cites-crisis-of-confidence-on-health-care-site.html?_r=1&

[71] http://thehill.com/blogs/healthwatch/health-reform-implementation/326943-more-repairs-planned-for-obamacare-site

[72] http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/06/us/politics/senator-cites-crisis-of-confidence-on-health-care-site.html?_r=0

OCTOBER 11, 2013

REPORTS SURFACE OF PROBLEMS WITH "834s": ENROLLMENT DATA SENT TO INSURERS

According to several insurance industry officials, 834 reports are sometimes confusing and duplicative. In some cases, they show that the same person enrolled and canceled several times on a single day. The reports indicate deeper software issues beyond volume.[73]

INTERNAL CGI REPORT RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT "FIXES" TO FAULTY SYSTEM

An internal report entitled "Initial FFM Data Analysis" raised red flags about major issues with the system during its initial launch. According to the report, nearly 50 percent of initial applicants were missing or incorrectly determining verification and eligibility. The report concludes: "CGI/CMS to have a review board to agree on which issues can (technically) and should (politically/practically) be solved with back-end batch jobs to correct data to ensure effective use of resources and time."[74]

"WAR ROOM" NOTES PAPER APPLICATIONS "STUCK IN THE SAME QUEUE"

"The paper applications allow people to feel like they are moving forward in the process and provides another option; at the end of the day, we are all stuck in the same queue," the notes from an Obama administration meeting. The Oct. 11 notes said, "The call center has daily requests for paper applications upwards of 30,000. The same portal is used to determine eligibility no matter how the application is submitted (paper, online), so improving that experience for everyone matters and there is coordination to improve that experience."[75]

OCTOBER 18, 2013

AFTER TWO WEEKS, SEBELIUS CONCEDES "WE DIDN"T HAVE ENOUGH TESTING." [76]

OCTOBER 19, 2013

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS REPORT 476,000 HEALTH INSURANCE APPLICATION FILED[77]

OCTOBER 20, 2013

OMB DIRECTOR CANNOT CONFIRM THAT WEBSITE WILL BE FIXED BY DECEMBER 15[78]

HHS BLOG POST ANNOUNCES "TECH SURGE" WILL BRING IN "BEST AND BRIGHTEST" TO HELP[79]

The Washington Post asks the Question: If the "best and the brightest" are being brought on Obamacare now, who was on it before?

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[73] http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/federal-health-exchange-sending-confusing-enrollment-information-to-insurers/2013/10/11/a2f3ce2e-31ec-11e3-9c68-1cf643210300_story.html

[74] http://energycommerce.house.gov/sites/republicans.energycommerce.house.gov/files/CGI.pdf

[75] http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-250_162-57610719/

[76] http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304384104579141381314028434

[77] http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/10/19/obamacare-applications-health-exchange/3071661/

[78] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQy-6x8ismI

[79] http://www.hhs.gov/digitalstrategy/blog/2013/10/making-healthcare-gov-better.html

OCTOBER 21, 2013

OBAMA PUSHES HOTLINE AS TECH PROBLEMS PERSIST

The President reiterated in a speech that the "product is good." He reassured users (many of whom have yet to get to a stage where they can compare prices), "The health insurance that's being provided is good. It's high quality and it's affordable."[80] At the President's urging, people called the Exchange Hotline, only to get a busy signal. Those that did get through were referred back to the Website.[81]

OCTOBER 22, 2013

SEBELIUS: OBAMA DID NOT KNOW ABOUT OBAMACARE WEBSITE GLITCHES[82]

JEFFREY ZIENTS TO LEAD "TECH SURGE"[83]

OCTOBER 23, 2013

CARNEY: "THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT IS NOT A WEBSITE."

"We are making changes every day and improvements every day to improve that experience so that more and more people can use it effectively, and we are making it clear that there are other ways to enroll, because the Affordable Care Act is not a website."[84]

CARNEY: DID NOT EXPECT THE SCALE OF PROBLEMS WE'VE SEEN

"Secretary Sebelius was referring to what I have said and what the president himself has said, which is that while we knew that there would be some glitches and actually said publicly that we expected some problems, we did not know until the problems manifested themselves after the launch that they would be as significant as they have turned out to be."[85]

CONTRACTORS TESTIFY: "IT WAS NOT OUR DECISION TO GO LIVE"

In testimony[86] before the House Energy and Commerce Committee, contractors pivoted the blame for the rocky rollout on CMS' management of the project. "End-to-end testing was the responsibility of CMS," testified CGI Federal's Cheryl Campbell. QSSI maintained that they sent warnings and concerns to CMS about the lack of testing.[87]

Contractor's also made reference to issues emanating from the late decision to abandon the anonymous browsing feature. Andrew Slavitt of Optum, which designed the "enterprise identity management" (EIDM) function testified that "one of the reasons for the high concurrent volume at the registration system was a late decision requiring consumers to create an account before they could browse for insurance products."[88] Campbell named Henry Chao, the Deputy Chief Information Officer at CMS, as the individual responsible for the last-minute decision. Reports surfaced that Chao was a frequent White House visitor.[89]

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[80] http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/10/21/remarks-president-affordable-care-act

[81] http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/361771/presidents-urging-people-call-exchange-hotline-cant-get-through-andrew-johnson#!

[82] www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2013/10/22/sebelius_obama_did_not_know_about_obamacare_website_glitches.html

[83] http://www.politico.com/politico44/2013/10/jeff-zients-to-lead-the-tech-surge-175680.html

[84] http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2013/10/23/carney_the_affordable_care_act_is_not_a_website.html

[85] www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2013/10/23/carney_on_obamacare_website_we_did_not_know_until_the_problem_manifest_them selves.html

[86] http://energycommerce.house.gov/hearing/ppaca-implementation-failures-didn%E2%80%99t-know-or-didn%E2%80%99t-disclose

[87] http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/house-panel-grills-contractors-on-troubled-health-insurance-web-site/2013/10/24/8f42c748-3ca7-11e3-b7ba-503fb5822c3e_story.html

[88] http://www.cnn.com/2013/10/23/politics/congress-obamacare-website/

[89] http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2013-10-24/news/sns-rt-us-usa-healthcare-chao-20131024_1_white-house-website-medicaid-services

OCTOBER 24, 2013

SEBELIUS: "THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE CALLING FOR ME TO RESIGN" ARE "PEOPLE I DO NOT WORK FOR"[90]

OCTOBER 25, 2013

ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES TARGET OF NOVEMBER 30 FOR FIXES, NAMES QSSI AS "GENERAL CONTRACTOR"

The Obama administration pledged it would fix problems in the federal health insurance marketplace by Nov. 30, just two weeks before the deadline to sign up for coverage to replace health insurance policies being canceled because they do not meet new federal standards. Quality Software Services Inc., a unit of the UnitedHealth Group, would now "manage the overall effort." That company had a role in developing one of the most troubled components of the exchanges, which helped verify the identities of those registering. Zients stated, "By the end of November, HealthCare.gov will work smoothly for the vast majority of users." [91]

SECURITY HOLE PATCHED

Until the Department of Health fixed the security hole, anyone could easily reset your Healthcare.gov password without your knowledge and potentially hijack your account. Security consultants say it's troubling that such a privacy concern remained unaddressed for more than three weeks after the federal government launched the Obamacare website Oct. 1.[92]

OCTOBER 26, 2013

IRS REPORTS 330,000 REQUESTS FROM OBAMACARE EXCHANGES

The IRS reported handling more than 330,000 requests from ObamaCare exchanges to calculate whether Americans are eligible for federal tax credits when purchasing insurance through the program. The agency said it is receiving about 80,000 data requests daily.[93]

OCTOBER 27, 2013

DATA SERVICES HUB CRASHES

The data services hub, a system that supplies tax information and other federal agency data to Web sites run by the U.S. and 14 states to sell medical coverage, was unavailable after a malfunction at the data center that hosts it. The center, operated by Verizon Communications Inc. unit Terremark, lost connectivity after workers tried to replace a failed networking component. A notice on the federal Web site today warned visitors that the system was down:

"We are experiencing technical difficulties and hope to have them resolved soon," the notice said. "Please try again later. In a hurry? You might be able to apply faster at our Marketplace call center. Call 1-800-318-2596 to talk with one of our trained representatives about applying over the phone."[94]

[90] http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2013/10/24/sebelius_i_dont_work_for_the_people_who_want_me_to_resign.html
[91] http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/26/us/politics/general-contractor-named-to-fix-health-web-site.html?_r=0
[92] http://money.cnn.com/2013/10/29/technology/obamacare-security/index.html?section=money_mostpopular\
[93] http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2013/10/26/irs-released-preliminary-report-on-obamacare-inquiries/
[94] http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/obamacare-insurance-websites-limited-by-verizon-data-hub-failure/2013/10/27/1d1408a4-3f6c-11e3-b028-de922d7a3f47_story.html

OCTOBER 28, 2013

ENROLLMENT DEADLINE DELAYED UNTIL MARCH 31

The administration "has determined that it would be unfair to require individuals in this situation to make a (penalty) payment," the Health and Human Services department said in guidance issued that evening. The department is creating a special one-time hardship exemption for people who get covered by March 31. And they won't have to file additional paperwork to apply for the exemption.[95]

OCTOBER 29, 2013

TAVENNER TESTIFIES BEFORE WAYS AND MEANS: "THE SYSTEM IS WORKING…"

"The system is working. It's just not working as smoothly or as consistently as we want," said Tavenner, administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. "The system is built, the hub is working, we were able to correct the create account issue, so now we're doing the rest of fixes and improving system performance."[96]

SHOP EXCHANGES AND SPANISH LANGUAGE WEBSTIE DELAYED UNTIL END OF NOVEMBER

The SHOP exchanges and Spanish language website were originally slated to go live November 1, having already been delayed from an October 1 rollout. Under the new timeline, individuals and small businesses who hope to have an operational plan by January 1 will only have about two weeks to meet the December 15 enrollment deadline.[97]

OCTOBER 30, 2013

SEBELIUS: "THE WEBSITE HAS NEVER CRASHED"

"We were anxious to get the website up and running and functional, which we have clearly failed to do to date. Although, I would suggest the website has never crashed. It is functional, but at a very slow speed and very low reliability and has continued to function," HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius said at a House Energy and Commerce Committee hearing on Wednesday.[98]

WEBSITE DOWN AS SEBELIUS TESTIFIES

Federal health officials said the site was taken down Tuesday night after a "partial outage" at Verizon Terremark's data center. HHS officials said HealthCare.gov was expected to be back up Wednesday morning, but at 2:45 p.m., users still saw the message: "The system is down at the moment."[99]

OCTOBER 2 – NOVEMBER 2, 2013

ONE MAN'S EXPERIENCE IN PICTURES AND SCREENCAPS

Since Oct. 2, Miami resident Nick Athanassiadis has spent several hours a day on the Internet trying to create an account on the federal Obamacare marketplace.[100] Screencaps of his month-long experience can be found here.

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[95] http://news.yahoo.com/white-house-oks-limited-waiver-230954593.html;_ylt=A2KJ3CXIsG9S9DQAGeDQtDMD

[96] http://www.politico.com/story/2013/10/obamacare-cms-enrollment-november-99060.html

[97] http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/on-small-business/delayed-again-critical-function-of-health-care-laws-small-business-exchange-pushed-back/2013/10/30/c8a3f414-416e-11e3-a624-41d661b0bb78_story.html

[98] http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2013/10/30/sebelius_obamacare_website_has_never_crashed.html

[99] http://www.politico.com/story/2013/10/kathleen-sebelius-obamacare-enrollment-site-99091.html?hp=l1

[100] http://www.cnbc.com/id/101171790

NOVEMBER 1, 2013

ZIENTS: SITE ON TRACK TO WORK BY END OF NOVEMBER

"There are two broad categories of fixes," Zients said on a conference call. One has been affecting responsiveness, or speed of performance, and the other involves true glitches that might show up as screens that don't make sense or blank screens. Zients declined to characterize how bad the problems are or if it was an expected number or range of issues for a website of this size.[101]

NOVEMBER 2, 2013

SITE GOES DOWN FOR "MAINTENANCE"

The application, enrollment tools, and "data hub" went down from 9 p.m. ET until 9 a.m. ET the next day.[102]

NOVEMBER 4, 2013

OBAMA: "I'VE GOT ONE MORE CAMPAIGN IN ME: THE CAMPAIGN TO MAKE SURE THAT THIS LAW WORKS FOR EVERY SINGLE AMERICAN."[103]

SITE GOES DOWN MIDAFTERNOON

HealthCare.gov was down as of mid-afternoon that day.[104]

NOVEMBER 5, 2013

SITE DOWN FOR NIGHTLY MAINTENANCE FROM 1 AND 5AM

"The Health Insurance Marketplace online application isn't available from approximately 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. EST daily while we make improvements," the banner reads. "Additional down times may be possible as we work to make things better. The rest of the site and the Marketplace call center remain available during these hours."[105]

WAYS AND MEANS SUBPOENAS OBAMACARE ENROLLMENT DATA[106]

NOVEMBER 6, 2013

SEBELIUS: "WE ARE NOT WHERE WE NEED TO BE" AS FAR AS FIXES. "IT IS A PRETTY AGGRESSIVE SCHEDULE TO GET TO THE END OF THE PUNCH LIST BY THE END OF NOVEMBER." [107]

SEBELIUS: "PUNCH LIST" OF IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS INCLUDES HUNDREDS OF FIXES

In a hearing before the Senate Finance committee, she disclosed that the so-called punch list for repairs had included "a couple of hundred functional fixes" at the time the administration launched its tech surge mission.[108]

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[101] http://www.nbcnews.com/health/speed-true-glitches-among-problems-obamacare-website-team-finding-8C11511696
[102] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/02/obamacare-website-maintenance_n_4203138.html?utm_hp_ref=politics
[103] http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-politics/wp/2013/11/04/obama-on-health-care-ive-got-one-more-campaign-in-me-to-make-sure-this-law-works/
[104] http://thehill.com/blogs/healthwatch/health-reform-implementation/189160-healthcaregov-down-hhs-cancels-press-call
[105] http://www.cnn.com/2013/11/04/politics/obamacare/index.html
[106] http://thehill.com/blogs/healthwatch/health-reform-implementation/189325-rep-camp-subpoenaes-obamacare-enrollment-data
[107] http://www.finance.senate.gov/hearings/hearing/?id=3dd91089-5056-a032-5290-f158359b9247
[108] http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/sebelius-health-care-website-needed-couple-of-hundred-fixes-when-repair-effort-began/2013/11/06/69f0a536-4748-11e3-95a9-3f15b5618ba8_story.html

NOVEMBER 7, 2013

5 WEEKS AFTER ROLLOUT, BASIC LOGIN STILL NOT FULLY FUNCTIONAL

ABC News documents that users are still seeing "garbled text" when trying to start the process of signing up on Healthcare.gov.[109]

CMS: NEW PROBLEMS DISCOVERED "DOWNSTREAM"

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) said on a conference call with reporters that it had uncovered "new stresses further downstream in the system" that revealed the need for a fresh look at the back-end capacity needs of the online healthcare portal. CMS still pledged to have the website up and "running smoothly for most users" by November 30. [110]

NOVEMBER 12, 2013

CALL-IN CENTERS PROVIDE LITTLE RELIEF

There are 17 federally sponsored call locations staffed by more than 10,000 people. However, consumers are discovering that telephone representatives lack the authority to correct errors in online applications. Other consumers with more than routine questions are promised that specialists will call them back, but the calls never come.[111]

NOVEMBER 13, 2013

ADMINISTRATION: ONLY 27,000 WERE ABLE TO ENROLL THROUGH FEDERAL EXCHANGES

As of November 2, a total of 106,000 enrolled in health insurance in the first month. Approximately 27,000 of those sign-ups came from 36 states where the federal government is running the health-insurance exchange. The remaining 79,000 came through the 15 marketplaces run by states and the District of Columbia.[112]

SEBELIUS: "THE MARKETPLACE IS WORKING"

"The marketplace is working, people are enrolling," Sebelius told reporters in a conference call. "The promise of affordable health-care coverage is increasingly becoming a reality to more and more Americans."[113]

TOTAL COST OF EXCHANGE DEVELOPMENT AND COST OF REPAIRS UNKNOWN

In a hearing before the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, David Powner, Director of Information Technology Issues at the Government Accountability Office, could not estimate how much repairs to the exchange system would cost[114]:

> *David Powner, GAO:* But your question about what it's going to cost to fix it, that's where we're kind of blind to that. I think that's a key question, how much that will end up being.

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[109] http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2013/11/healthcare-gov-fixes-lost-in-translation-ffe-ee-myaccount-healthcare/

[110] http://thehill.com/blogs/healthwatch/health-reform-implementation/189615-more-o-care-site-problems-further-downstream

[111] http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/troubled-healthcaregov-unlikely-to-work-fully-by-end-of-november-as-white-house-vowed/2013/11/12/daf9670a-4bca-11e3-be6b-d3d28122e6d4_story_1.html

[112] http://aspe.hhs.gov/health/reports/2013/MarketPlaceEnrollment/rpt_enrollment.pdf

[113] http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-politics/wp/2013/11/13/sebelius-says-the-marketplace-is-working-for-health-care-enrollment/?hpid=z1

[114] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MuQWZ693RA0

Rep. Duncan: Does anybody know? We've spent $600 million already and not working. Does anybody have any idea how much this is going to cost us in the end? [Silence.] Nobody knows?

WHITE HOUSE CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER TODD PARK DODGES ON NOVEMBER 30 DEADLINE
Todd Park, the White House Chief Technology Officer couldn't answer the yes or no question asked by Chairman Issa and several other members of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee regarding whether healthcare.gov would be fully functional by the end of the November.[115]

NOVEMBER 14, 2013
OBAMA: "WE WOULD NOT HAVE ROLLED OUT SOMETHING KNOWING… IT WASN'T GOING TO WORK."
"We would not have rolled out something knowing very well that it wasn't going to work the way it was supposed, given all the scrutiny that we knew was going to be on the website."[116]

OBAMA: "I DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH AWARENESS ABOUT THE PROBLEMS…"
"…I did not have enough awareness about the problems in the website. Even a week into it, the thinking was that these were some glitches that would be fixed with patches, as opposed to some broader systemic problems that took much longer to fix and we're still working on them."[117]

NOVEMBER 16, 2013
WHITE HOUSE GOAL: "SUCCESS" EQUALS 80% OF USERS ABLE TO ENROLL BY END OF NOV.
The Obama administration will consider the new federal insurance marketplace a success if 80 percent of users can buy health-care plans online. That means as many as one in five Americans who try to use the Web site to buy insurance will still be unable to do so.[118]

SITE PERFORMANCE GOAL DOES NOT INCLUDE MEASURE OF ACCURACY
There are still no concrete goals for the site's accuracy in determining eligibility for subsidies and tax credits or providing insurance companies are given correct enrollment information[119]

SITE STILL FACES ISSUES AT 20-30,000 SIMULTANEOUS USERS, HALF THE INTENDED CAPACITY[120]

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[115] http://www.politico.com/story/2013/11/darrell-issa-hearing-obamacare-deadline-slipping-99808.html
[116] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWdwFicSW1U
[117] http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/11/14/statement-president-affordable-care-act
[118] http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/healthcaregov-goal-80-percent-able-to-enroll-for-insurance-through-web-site/2013/11/16/04fa02a2-4e1a-11e3-ac54-aa84301ced81_story.html
[119] http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/healthcaregov-goal-80-percent-able-to-enroll-for-insurance-through-web-site/2013/11/16/04fa02a2-4e1a-11e3-ac54-aa84301ced81_story_1.html
[120] http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/healthcaregov-goal-80-percent-able-to-enroll-for-insurance-through-web-site/2013/11/16/04fa02a2-4e1a-11e3-ac54-aa84301ced81_story_1.html

NOVEMBER 19, 2013

HENRY CHAO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION SERVICES – 30%-40% OF HEALTHCARE.GOV STILL NOT FULLY BUILT

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Deputy Chief Information Officer Henry Chao testified before the Energy and Commerce Committee and revealed that up to 40% of the website still needed to be built, including the mechanism that will deliver payments to insurers.[121]

HENRY CHAO: "…I WAS NOT GIVEN THE FINAL REPORT."

The Deputy Chief Information Officer and Deputy Director of the Office of Information Services at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Henry Chao, testified that he had never been shown a presentation prepared at the request of CMS by McKinsey & Co. regarding the implementation of HealthCare.gov. Chao was the project manager for the new website. The presentation was given to top officials at the Department of Health and Human Services and the White House in late March and early April of 2013. Chao testified, "I haven't seen that presentation … I was not given the final report." Chao claimed he had been interviewed by those preparing the report, but had never seen the presentation warning of the challenges to meeting the October 1 start of open enrollment until then.[122] The report itself highlights the lack of leadership suggested by Chao's ignorance. Portions state that there was "no single empowered decision-making authority," and that there was no "shared definition of success."[123]

CARNEY: OBAMA WAS TOLD ABOUT "RED TEAM" REPORT IN APRIL, BUT DID NOT EXPECT EXTENT OF PROBLEMS

Speaking to reporters, Carney said, "The president received regular briefings on various aspects of implementing the [health care law], including the recommendations from this review and the steps that [agencies] had taken to address those recommendations." A few moments later, Carney remarked that while the president was warned "there would be glitches, there would be problems, but that certainly we never expected, he was certainly not told, and nobody here was told, because there was not this expectation, that the site would perform as poorly as it did." [124]

SECURITY EXPERTS TESTIFY: EXCHANGES PRONE TO HACKING – RECOMMEND SHUTTING IT DOWN

David Kennedy, CEO of information security firm TrustedSEC before a House Science, Space, and Technology committee hearing stated, "…if I had to guess, based on what I can see … I would say the website is either hacked already or will be soon."[125] Three out of the four cyber security experts concurred that, given the security issues, the exchange should be shut down until security issues were rectified.[126]

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[121] http://www.politico.com/story/2013/11/tech-chief-didnt-see-march-obamacare-memo-100058.html?hp=t1_3

[122] http://energycommerce.house.gov/hearing/security-healthcaregov

[123] http://energycommerce.house.gov/sites/republicans.energycommerce.house.gov/files/Hearings/OI/20131119/201303-CMS-Red-Team-Discussion-Document.pdf

[124] http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-politics/wp/2013/11/19/carney-wont-say-if-obama-was-informed-of-healthcare-gov-problems/

[125] http://www.foxnews.com/tech/2013/11/19/healthcaregov-already-compromised-security-expert-says/

[126] http://science.house.gov/hearing/full-committee-hearing-my-data-healthcaregov-secure

NOVEMBER 23, 2013

REPAIRS INTRODUCING NEW FLAWS: NEW CODE UNUSABLE

According to a new report, roughly one-third to half the new computer code CGI is writing cannot be used because it is revealing flaws when it is fully examined by a group of outside testers.[127]

NOVEMBER 30, 2013

ADMINISTRATION "DEADLINE" FOR HEALTHCARE.GOV REPAIRS

The functionality goal is 50K simultaneous users, the minimum standard it was supposed to meet upon the original launch date.[128]

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[127] http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/healthcaregov-contractor-had-high-confidence-but-low-success/2013/11/23/1ab2c2b2-5407-11e3-9fe0-fd2ca728e67c_story_1.html
[128] http://www.nationaljournal.com/health-care/obamacare-enrollment-deadline-extended-20131122